

VZCZCXYZ0002
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEG #4928 2221247
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 101247Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0462
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS CAIRO 004928

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NEA/PPD FOR ALBERTO FERNANDEZ, ROBIN SMITH AND
DAVID BENZE
R/PPR FOR GRETCHEN WELCH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [IS](#) [LE](#) [EG](#)

SUBJECT: EGYPT MEDIA TRENDS: AUGUST 10, 2006

¶1. Summary. All Egyptian terrestrial and satellite channels aired Hassan Nasrallah's exclusive statement on Al-Manar TV, to include Egyptian Television which did not air items from Al-Manar before the war in Lebanon. Lead stories in morning television and print news included Israel's vote to expand its ground invasion and France's break from the US regarding the draft resolution. The day's commentaries included differing characterizations of Hassan Nasrallah and a criticism of Arab media's influencing of the public. End Summary.

¶2. In the headlines and front pages. "Israel's Losses Continue." "Israel Fires its Army Leader in Lebanon, Expands the Land War." These and similar headlines in government-owned, independent and opposition papers showed Israel in a weakening position against Hezbollah. Simultaneously, the papers emphasized the deadlock over the potential ceasefire resolution in headlines such as, "Lebanon is Back to Point Zero", "No Progress on the UN Resolution" and, "Differences Between Washington and Paris: Chirac Threatens to Issue a Draft French Resolution." All papers also headlined Nasrallah's latest appearance on TV, with headlines such as, "He Vowed Lebanon will be a Graveyard for Invading Israeli Occupation Troops," and "Welcome to the Battle, We Will Force You Out and You Will Pay a High Price."

¶3. In the commentaries. Independent and opposition papers showed a relatively high focus on Hezbollah, with columnists using differing vernacular in their characterizations of Hassan Nasrallah. For example, a senior columnist in opposition daily, Al-Wafd, characterized Hezbollah as no longer "an extension of Syria or Iran, but as "developing into a national power." Meanwhile, a well-known commentator for independent daily, Nahdet Misr, called Hezbollah "the new Guevara", referencing its popularity with the people and its image as an alternative to "Arab rulers who were forced to condemn the war (only) after their nations became angry."

¶4. In an interesting criticism of the "Arab media's approach", especially per paragraph 5 below, Moneim Said, a well-known intellectual, political analyst and celebrity television commentator, criticized the media's "showing of absolute support for Hezbollah and exclusion of

any opposition to this trend." He continued in his column in independent daily, Nahdet Misr, by comparing Arab media to "Israeli media which directs its reports and analysis to real information."

14. In the airwaves. In what would have been an unusual practice before the war erupted in Lebanon, Egyptian Television aired Hassan Nasrallah's full statement, as given to Al-Manar TV. ETV broadcast it as the third or fourth item following the top-of-the-hour reporting on breaking news updates. Excerpts of the statements were repeated throughout all news shows, particularly focusing on his comment that Lebanon will "be a graveyard for invading occupation troops," and his denial that Israel "weakened Hezbollah's rocket capabilities."

RICCIARDONE